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When in Philadelphia last fall, Franz Cumont told us that there is a set of technical phrases in ancient Greek books on astrology which have now been shown to be literal translations from the Babylonian. In precisely the same way, such Buddhist phrases as *æon-lasting sin* and others gained similar currency among the ancients, *who persistently sought out the distinctive teachings of the great nations, just as we do now.*

With these reservations, I wish, as a student of Buddhism, to give my most cordial adhesion to the conclusions of the learned Brahmin scholar, who has dealt with a knotty problem in a masterly manner and summarized the researches of many specialists.

PHILADELPHIA, PA.

ALBERT J. EDMUNDS.

A POSTSCRIPT TO INDO-ROMAN RELATIONS IN THE FIRST CENTURY.

In *The Monist* for December, 1911, Professor Garbe denied the existence of Buddhist loans to canonical Christianity, and gave as one of his reasons the following question and answer:

"Do the evidences of intercommunication at all permit the *assumption*¹ that as early as the first century after Christ, or earlier, Buddhist legends and ideas had found their way into Palestine? . . .

"They are not apt to raise this possibility to a serviceable degree of probability for as early a period as the first post-Christian century."

To this assertion I replied in the following number, avoiding reference to the canonical literature, which was simultaneously considered by my friend Mr. Albert J. Edmunds, but assembling various evidences of a large, important and rapidly increasing intercommunication between Rome and India during the first century of the Christian era, as indicating the possibility of the assumption which Professor Garbe had outlined.

In *The Monist* for July, 1912, in a postscript to his most instructive discussion, Professor Garbe acknowledges the probability of closer intercommunication than he has heretofore admitted, and accepts one of the canonical parallels offered by Mr. Edmunds; but he thinks that I "beg the question" by *assuming* the possibility of an interchange of ideas as well as goods.

To this objection I would reply that I was but addressing my-

¹ Italics mine.

self to the *assumption* which he had declared to be unwarranted; so that if there has been any begging of the question it would seem to have been in the same degree on each side of the discussion.

Professor Garbe objects to any citation of the *Periplus* because it does not mention religion; but the citation was merely to show the existence of an active commerce, and it is well known that the missionary and the trader have gone close together in many ages of the world. They have not always respected one another, but they have usually followed the same paths. Surely Professor Garbe would not expect a future historian of our own times to deny the *assumption* of Christian missions in China because some surviving consular report on the Shanghai trade might omit a reference to the Nicene Creed!

Professor Garbe objects, also, that the Hindu traders to the Roman Empire were Dravidians and stupid, and therefore not likely to talk of their religion. But in the first century of our era they were increasingly Indo-Scythian, from a portion of India that professed a liberal and proselytizing Buddhism, and I repeat that for that date and race, a spreading of ideas together with an interchange of goods, was not only a possible *assumption*, but a probable fact.

The extent of such intercommunication is made much more evident by Mr. J. Kennedy's paper "The Secret of Kanishka," begun in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* for July 1912. The long-drawn discussion as to the so-called Vikrama era of 58 B. C. seems brought to a reasonable conclusion through Mr. Kennedy's brilliant assembling of Chinese and numismatic evidence. It was the era of the second Buddhist Council and of the Kushan king Kanishka. His power over northwestern India, built up by his control of the transcontinental silk-trade, was fortified by his becoming the protector of the Buddhist faith; and under him and his immediate successors, just before the Christian era, it is highly probable that his faith was expounded to the east as far as Turfan, and to the west as far as Charax Spasini, Antioch and Alexandria.

The truth is, that during the period between 50 B. C. and 100 A. D., approximately, India was a leading factor in the world's thought, industry, commerce, and wealth; and, this being the case, to repeat Professor Garbe's own words, "the evidences of intercommunication permit the assumption of the migration of Buddhist legends and ideas into Palestine as early as the first century after Christ."

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